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Professor J. B. Henneman offered a motion that during the present meeting the time allowed for the reading of each paper be limited to twenty minutes, and that no one shall occupy more than five minutes in the discussion of a paper.

The motion was adopted.

The reading of papers was then begun.

1. "The origin of the rule forbidding hiatus in French verse." By Dr. P. B. Marcou, of Harvard University.

This paper was discussed by Professor E. S. Sheldon.

2. "Marco Polo and the *Squier's Tale*." By Professor John M. Manly, of Brown University.

3. "Goethe's attitude toward contemporary politics." By Dr. Robert N. Corwin, of Yale University.

4. "Ueber Goethe's sonette." By Professor J. Schipper, of the University of Vienna, Austria. [This paper was presented by the Secretary.]

SECOND SESSION.

The second regular session was convened December 26, at 2.30 p. m. President James Morgan Hart presided.

5. "The conventions of the drama." By Professor Brander Matthews, of Columbia College.

Remarks upon this paper were offered by Professors A. H. Tolman and A. Cohn.

6. "The *Nibelungenlied* and *Sage* in modern poetry." By Professor Gustav Gruener, of Yale University.

7. "Notes on John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester." By Mr. Henry S. Pancoast, of Germantown, Pa.

John Tiptoft was representative of the antagonistic tendencies in the England of his time; the England of the Wars of the Roses and the rise

of the "New Learning;" of Caxton and Richard III. The study of his character and career illuminates this complex and interesting epoch. Tiptoft was born at Everton, Cambridgeshire, probably in 1428. The Tiptofts had risen through the patronage of the House of Lancaster. On his mother's side Tiptoft was descended from that Prince of Powys that Scott introduced into "The Betrothed." He was educated at Balliol College, Oxford; a College which then held a peculiarly important relation to the introduction of the "New Learning" into England. Three men, besides Tiptoft himself, left this College during the middle years of the century, to study in Italy and bring back books and mss. to their University. The fact is significant when we remember that Grocyn's visit to Italy was not until about 1485, some thirty years later than Tiptoft's. Tiptoft was made Earl of Worcester by Henry VI. in 1449, but shortly after deserted the King's party for that of York, and in 1452 became Lord High Treasurer apparently by the Duke of York's influence. He held this post until 1455, when he was dismissed with other high officials of the Yorkist party, Henry VI. having gained a temporary advantage over the opposite faction. Hard pressed by the Court party, York took up arms against the King. At this critical time, Tiptoft appears to have abandoned his patron for a trip to Jerusalem and Italy, "desiring," says Bale, "before all things, rest." After some time in Jerusalem, he returned by way of Venice, Padua and Rome, making his famous Latin oration before the Pope and Cardinals and winning great distinction. "What worship had he in Rome," writes Caxton, "in the presence of our Holy Father, the Pope." This Pope was Pius Second, known as Aeneas Sylvius, a noted humanist. Tiptoft then studied about three years (probably from 1458-9 to 1460-61) under Gwarino at Ferrara. Gwarino having been a pupil of Chrysoloras, the missionary to Italy of the "New Learning," we have in this succession the epitome of a great world-movement.

Tiptoft is found again in England in 1461. Two events probably induced his return, the death of Gwarino in 1460, and the accession of Edward IV. in 1461. Although he had left the Yorkists at the outbreak of the Civil War, and only returned in their day of triumph, he was at once distinguished by the royal favor, and held numerous high posts up to the time of his death. A great scholar and patron of letters, his career is blackened with a cruelty which called forth execration even in that bloody time. Sent to Ireland as Lord Deputy in 1467, within a few months he brought about the execution of Lord Desmond, his predecessor in office, on the charge of treason. The Irish authorities claim that he acted under secret instructions from the Queen, who had a personal grudge against Desmond. This is not substantiated; but Tiptoft's conduct is certainly open to suspicion. The matter is made more deplorable by Desmond's high character, and the singular fact that he too was a scholar and patron of learning. According to tradition, Tiptoft murdered Desmond's young sons at the same time. Hall tells the story in his Chronicle, and refers to it as Tiptoft's worst act of cruelty. It is also mentioned in the poem on "The Infamous End of the Lord Tiptoft," &c., in "The Mirror for Magistrates."

In 1470, during the rising of Warwick in behalf of the Lancastrians, certain brutal indignities were inflicted by Tiptoft's order upon the bodies of twenty prisoners (Stow says, "both gentlemen and seamen"), which he, as Lord High Constable, had sentenced to execution. From the savagery of this act, Tiptoft was called "the butcher of England." Warkworth's Chronicle, after relating the occurrence, adds: "For the which the people of the land were greatly displeased, and ever afterwards the Earl of Worcester was greatly [be] hated among the people, for these disordinate deaths that he used contrary to the law of the land." The wanton ferocity of this action brings to mind the Italian proverb, quoted by Ascham in proof of the brutalizing effect of Italy upon the English nature: *Inglese Italianato è un diabololo incarnato*.

During the momentary triumph of Warwick, Tiptoft was taken prisoner while hiding in the top of a high tree, which expressed, says the Chronicler, "the precipice of his fortunes." He was tried before the Earl of Oxford, whose father and brother had, eight years before, been beheaded by his command, condemned and executed on Tower Hill. Fabyan declares that as he was being taken from Westminster to his execution, "the people pressed so importunately on him" that the Sheriffs were obliged to borrow jail for him that night in the Fleet. This incident is told with additions in "The Mirror for Magistrates." The mob being there represented as so infuriated against Tiptoft that he feared they would have eaten him alive.

Caxton's tributes to Tiptoft are numerous and familiar. If the printer is to be trusted, Tiptoft was the most learned man among the English nobility of his time. It is generally overlooked that these tributes cannot be set down to personal friendship. Tiptoft is known as Caxton's friend and patron, but Caxton did not return to England, after a continuous absence of some thirty-five years, until about six years after Tiptoft's execution. Caxton's words are rather evidence of the high estimation in which Tiptoft's scholarship was held. Tiptoft reflects his age at its best and worst. He was set at a confluence of evil influences, when civil strife following the Hundred years War had debauched the English nobility. Abroad he came close to that Italy which Machiavelli called "the corrupter of the world." Yet a new intellectual life was growing, and Tiptoft's career alternates between scholarship and political intrigues. He shows us how early the new spirit was astir in England, and how it was retarded; he is the "butcher" and "the first fruits of the Italian Renaissance."

8. "A Wilhelm Tell ballad in America." By Professor M. D. Learned, of the University of Pennsylvania.

The President called to the chair Professor Francis A. March, formerly President of the Association.

9. "*Warmph*: a study of the development and the disappearance of a stop between nasal and spirant in American English." By Professor C. H. Grandgent, of Harvard University.

This paper was discussed by Professors Leo Wiener and Francis A. March.

10. "Notes on Ben Jonson's quarrel with Marston." By Dr. Josiah H. Penniman, of the University of Pennsylvania.

EXTRA SESSION.

The Association convened in an Extra Session December 26, at 8 p. m.

Dr. Timothy Dwight, President of Yale University opened the meeting by a brief Address of Welcome.

Professor T. R. Lounsbury, President of the Modern Language Club of Yale University, welcomed the Association in behalf of the Club.

The size of the gathering and the character of the men who composed it struck him as significant of the radical change that had taken place in the educational system of the country during the last quarter of a century. Thirty years before such a gathering would have been impossible; forty years before no one would have believed that it ever would be possible. He was disposed to think that the scholars of the younger generation had very little conception of the difficulties encountered by the men of the older generation in the departments of study represented on this occasion. In the curriculum of forty years before the position held by all the modern languages was worse than unimportant, it was abject. English in particular had no recognized position at all. Its study is the creation of the past thirty years. He had himself passed through four years of a college course without once hearing from the lips of an instructor in the class-room the name of a single English author or the title of a single English classic. The only text-book which he studied under the professor of English, when he was in college, was the oration of Demosthenes on the Crown in the original Greek. There had been nothing exceptional in this. His experience was essentially the same as that of all his contemporaries. It was a matter of supreme satisfaction that this had now all been changed: that the modern languages had at last taken their rightful place in the college curriculum, not to the exclusion or depreciation of any studies, but as contributory to

the common good of all. In bringing about this result the men who were here before him had been largely instrumental, and he congratulated the members of the Association on the great work they had achieved in the past and the still brighter prospects that were opening before them in the future.

Professor James Morgan Hart, President of the Association, then read an address upon the subject :

“ENGLISH AS A LIVING LANGUAGE.”

English is a living language. At least philologists, popular orators, and genial newspaper editors give us that assurance. In fact I have even entitled this address accordingly. Yet I wish I could persuade myself that the assurance does not cloak a self-deception. English, we say, is a living language. What is a *living* language? Scarcely one that transmits itself by merely living upon the past, that echoes in distorted shape the formulae of the past without respiring the vital spirit.

English is *our* living language, that is, we use it for the expression of our daily needs, small and great. But why and how do we use it? Do we use it because we have really mastered it and can use it at will, this intensely idiomatic language, feeling ourselves truly at home in its subtleties? Or do we use it merely in a blind, half-conscious manner, aware that in any other idiom we should express ourselves even more awkwardly?

Let us look at the undergraduate world? It is a queer world. It still has its glamour, even for those of us who figure our undergraduate career with a 60 instead of a 90. There are still the college traditions and interests and Greek-letter fraternities, there is still the conventional conflict of classes, the same clannishness. Names may have changed; the outward show of life has become richer. There are dress-suits now and elaborate suppers, etchings and oriental rugs. Is the spirit changed likewise? In the matter of English, for example, do our end-of-the-century undergraduates express themselves better than the men of the sixties or the fifties?

Speaking for myself I would answer that the present generation is inferior to that of thirty years ago, much inferior. Not, of course, that every student now writes badly and that every student thirty years ago wrote well. I am speaking only of the general average of expression. This average, then, I believe, has fallen perceptibly in thirty years. The belief rests upon many grounds, but I shall mention here only two—one general and recognizable by all, the other more personal.

The first ground is to be found in the Harvard reports. Every autumn for the past three years an intelligent public has been called upon officially, by the Harvard authorities, to recognize in the Harvard undergraduate a young man unable to spell or to punctuate, or to form a coherent sentence,